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of another crop of crystals remain in the world. Were all clans now existent annihilated, it is highly debatable, to say the least, whether the science of sociology, in so far as it occupied itself with clans, would have prognostic value. The difference between the two groups of concepts becomes particularly clear if we consider negative instances. If, out of one hundred clans, ninety-nine obeyed a certain sociological "law," we would justly flatter ourselves with having made a particularly neat and sweeping generalization; our "law" would have validity, even if we never succeeded in "explaining" the one exception. But if, out of one million selected experiments intended to test a physical law, 999,999 corroborated the law and one persistently refused to do so, after all disturbing factors had been eliminated, we would be driven to seek a new formulation of our law. There is something deeper involved here than relative accuracy. The social "law" is an abbreviation or formula for a finite number of evaluated phenomena, and rarely more than an approximately accurate formula at that; the natural "law" is a universally valid formulation of a regular sequence observable in an indefinitely large number of phenomena selected at random. With the multiplication of instances social "laws" become more and more blurred in outline, natural "laws" more and more rigid. However, the clarification of the sphere and concepts of social science in its more generalized aspects is a difficult problem that we can not fully discuss here.¹

I strongly suspect that Dr. Kroeber will not find me to differ essentially from him in my conception of history. What I should like to emphasize, however, is that it is perfectly possible to hold this view of history without invoking the aid of a "superorganic." Moreover, had the uniqueness of historical phenomena been as consistently clear to him as he himself would require, it would be difficult to understand why he should have insisted on eliminating the individual in the narrow sense of the word.

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THE AUTONOMY OF THE SOCIAL.

IN a stimulating disquisition on "The Superorganic" (this journal, April-June, 1917, pp. 163-214) Dr. Kroeber once more returns to the topic which of late he has made peculiarly his own.

¹ For a penetrating analysis of the fundamental distinction between historical and natural science I strongly urge all anthropologists, and social scientists generally, who are interested in method to refer to H. Rickert's difficult but masterly book on *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung; eine Einleitung in die historischen Wissenschaften*. I have been greatly indebted to it.

With the major, critical, destructive part of the essay I must express unequivocal agreement. With Dr. Kroeber I hold that; (1) the biological point of view fails to account for social phenomena (autonomy of history with reference to race and heredity); (2) the psychological point of view fails in the same connection (autonomy of history with reference to general psychology); (3) the problem of individual ability is also irrelevant (autonomy of history with reference to individualities).

But my agreement with Dr. Kroeber stops short of his formulation of the concept of historic autonomy. Having rejected alternative interpretations, Dr. Kroeber voices his belief in cultural or civilizational determinism. Events in history occur when they must occur. As evidence, the author adduces the many instances in which similar, almost identical, inventions or discoveries were made contemporaneously and independently by two or more men. Here we must call for a more precise determination of the group the civilization of which is being considered. Is it the civilization of the world at large? If that were the case, then, of course, there would be truth in the proposition: What is must be, all that is is reasonable, in the sense of having a reason, a cause. Unless indeed we are prepared to admit that one or another part of the cosmic whole may suddenly run amuck and play havoc with law and order, such a universal determinism must, of course, be accepted as a conceptual necessity, with reference to civilization, or anything else. But in the solution of concrete historic problems such a deterministic faith, while basic, is helpful not at all. I believe, however, that Dr. Kroeber is not speaking of civilization but of civilizations. Now, with reference to any particular civilization the deterministic creed breaks down. Mass phenomena and the theory of probability will, of course, within their domain, continue to apply. An invention being a function of knowledge and effort, when the requisite state of knowledge is reached and a number of minds are concentrating on a certain problem, the probability of the invention or discovery being made by one or more minds is high, and if the number of minds is large, the probability will approach certainty. On the other hand, the same invention may be made at a time when the probability of that event is very low, owing to the presence of an exceptional mind or through importation from another civilization. An invention thus made may have the same or greater historic consequences than would be the case in the alternative instance. Now in this as in a thousand and one similar instances the events may not be regarded as civilizationally or socially predetermined; with reference to the culture of the group they are accidental. The theory of

probability breaks down here, the individual event alone counts; and it may make the difference, for all time, between a high and a low civilization.

My second point of difference with Dr. Kroeber refers to the relation of a civilization to the chain of individuals who are its carriers. I grant that the civilizational stream may be considered as a closed system and that much can be gained from studying it as such. Dr. Kroeber, in his turn, grants that useful knowledge, even about the stream of civilization, may be gleaned from a study of its component individuals. But this is not going far enough. As a matter of fact, the civilizational stream is not merely carried but is also unrelentingly fed by its component individuals. The term "individual," in this context, requires specification. It is not the biological individual, nor is it the abstract being of general psychology, nor is it this or that more or less gifted individual; it is not even the average individual who partakes of the given civilization. The individual who counts here may be designated as the biographical individual. He is a historic complex *sui generis*. Neither *biological* nor psychological, nor civilizational factors exhaust his content. He has partaken of the culture of his social environment, but only of certain aspects of it, and these have come to him in a certain individual order, at certain definite places and times, and have been, on all these occasions, received and absorbed by a psyche that was unique. This is the concrete individual of historic society. He is unique and as such he reacts on the civilization of which he is the carrier. Leave him out, and a blind spot appears in the record of civilization. I am convinced that not along the objective study of civilization lies that "path of merely but deeply understanding phenomena," to which the author refers at another place. The inferiority of our knowledge of Kwakiutl or Yoruba civilization when compared to our knowledge of the civilization of France or Germany is in part due to the inferiority of the civilizational record; but it is also due, perhaps more significantly, to the vast inferiority of the biographical record. This is the crying need the modern ethnologist tries to supply; and to the extent to which he is successful, our knowledge of primitive civilization becomes more deep. A. A. GOLDENWEISER.

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THE STATUS OF WASHO

MR. JOHN P. HARRINGTON's announcement of the genetic relationship of Washo and Chumash (*American Anthropologist* (N.S.), 1917, p. 154) is welcome confirmation of a result which the undersigned had